

by Bob Saydlowski, Jr.

Pearl Drum Rack/Sota Shells

PEARL DRUM RACK



If a clutter of stand bases on your kit is visually unappealing to you, then Pearl has a way to clear the floor with their new *Drum Rack*, a collapsible, open-ended square frame made of aluminum. The *Rack* allows tom-tom mount arms, cymbal posts, and even microphones to be attached to its large bars, eliminating 80% of your kit's floor stands. (Snare stands, hi-hats, and floor toms stay on the floor.)

In order to accomplish this, special *BT-1* mounting brackets have been fabricated. Pearl's *BT-1* is the standard split-clamp bracket used on their tom-toms. The *BT-1*s have been mated with wide, C-clamp style fittings and will grip onto any of the *Rack*'s bars at any location. Brackets designated *PC-1* will accept 7/8" diameter tubing—like

Pearl's tom-tom arms, cymbal holders, and the top sections of their 800 and 900 cymbal stands. *PC-2* brackets will accept a lightweight pipe, due to their slimmer openings.

The *Rack* has six steel joints which connect a front bar, two side bars, and four legs. These joints allow the legs, as well as the side bars, to fold up compactly and still remain attached as a single unit. Once set up, the legs are locked in place using large T-bolts. All the ends have square rubber caps. Since drum setups can flare in or out, the side bars can swivel, allowing you to change the angles and the amount of space on both sides to accommodate individual setups. However, no matter how it is positioned, you can only enter and exit the

setup from the rear (or by ducking underneath the bar, if possible).

Model *DR-1* is the smaller of the two available *Racks*, measuring 27" high, by 53" wide, by 46 1/2" deep. (The *DR-2* is 65" wide for use with double bass drums.) The *DR-1* comes supplied with only four of the *PC-1* bracket clamps. Pearl should include more of these as a "starter," since almost everyone considering the *Rack* is likely to have more than two toms and two cymbals to mount up (or three toms and one cymbal, etc.). However, the *PC-1* clamps can be purchased separately at \$20.00 each. The lighter-weight *PC-2*s list at \$15.00, and if used with Pearl's *MH-80* mic' holders, drumkit miking can be done without the usual flurry of mic' stand bases everywhere.

My own kit includes three mounted toms, two *RotoToms*, and six cymbals. With a little creativity, I managed to fit everything on the *Rack* quite comfortably, using some Pearl *AX-20* and *AX-30* adaptors to connect pipes to other pipes, instead of going for all *PC-1* clamps. The *Rack* shook just a tiny bit under hard playing, but overall, it was balanced pretty well.

Due to its imposing size, the *Rack* might be difficult to use in a lounge setting (or any other place where you're cramped for space), but in concert or large club situations, it offers a sleek, modern appearance while allowing more exact positioning of drums and cymbals.

The *DR-1* retails at \$475.00; the *DR-2* at \$500.00.

SOTA SNARE DRUMS



SOTA (State-Of-The-Art) Percussion is making snare drum shells available in three varieties of wood: American walnut, African padauk, and Brazilian rosewood.

SOTA's shells are composed of dozens of pieces of solid wood, arranged so that all grains run in the same direction. The shell is 5/8" thick, with a diameter slightly undersized at 13 7/8". During construction,

the shell is glued and pressed under 1,800 pounds of continuous pressure.

Positioned vertically in the shell are 32 hardwood reinforcement dowels, making it very difficult for the drum body to go out of round. With all these specs, SOTA is able to produce a large bearing edge on both sides, having a 45° concave inner angle and a 22° outer angle.

The walnut shell's overall sound is flat with a minimum of overtones. Padauk is the warmest sounding, with maximum overtones. Rosewood is the brightest, with a full range of overtones. SOTA makes each variety available in 5", 6 1/2", and 8" depths, and will mount any choice of hardware for you, or just supply the basic shell itself.

I played an 8" padauk drum which was fitted with Tama hardware, *Diplomat* heads, and die-cast rims. After using the die-cast hoops, I experimented with

pressed hoops, and found the sound of the rimshot more pleasing to my own ears. The drumshell resonated clearly. SOTA compares it to a marimba bar, and I agree. The tonal quality was just amazing. I found the drum to have great volume and sensitivity throughout the dynamic range. The padauk (as well as the undrilled 5" rosewood body I saw) had a masterful appearance with a patchwork effect.

I was very impressed with the painstaking work that the people at SOTA have undertaken to come out with such an instrument. This is truly "state-of-the-art." I cannot think of any other custom shell that surpasses it.

SOTA shells in walnut range from \$275 to \$350 unmounted, padauk from \$425 to \$500, and rosewood from \$625 to \$700. For more info: SOTA Percussion, PO Box 528064, Chicago, IL 60652. (312) 737-0439.

